

File: H_H_Hall_1872_05_20

2010 May: OCR by Ian Bracher from a typescript made 2.11.1974 by HMW

2012 August 19: edited and corrected by IB from a photocopy of MS

Henry Hastings Hall to Sarah Bracher, 20 May 1872

Mandurah WA

May 20th 1872

Many thanks my dear Sister for your very long letter, the perusal I assure you has interested me more than anything I have seen for a very long time. Although we do not correspond I often think fondly of my few relatives in Sydney and they are so few that it requires no great expansion of the heart strings to entwine them all. I am delighted to hear that dear Aunt is prosperous and energetic as ever. Every month for the last three years I have been going to write to her. I need not quote Dr Young on Procrastination. Soon after I was married Aunt invited me and my wife and made a most generous offer connected with the trip, rightly thinking our means were limited. I have not quite given up the hope of seeing her again. Sure we are neither of us young and probably I am the elder in wear and tear of constitution — but I'm good for a voyage yet when opportunity serves — I have conversed with so many people from Sydney that I know a good deal about it. I know Aunt lives in an aristocratic part, and strange anomaly. Don't be shocked! at one time I could have told you how many Public houses there were in Pitt St doubtless very interesting as statistics, but by no means a pleasant reminiscence of a night under a blanket on Keilor Plains. There are other things besides poverty that make us acquainted with strange bedfellows. I am very pleased to hear that Cousin Amy is so comfortably settled and hope so[me] day to make Mr Herbert Gibson's acquaintance. Cousin Edward, I always expected would become a good useful member of society — he was in the right sort of leading-strings. Until you mentioned it I was not aware that poor Fred Hester had returned to Victoria. If you see him again remember me kindly to him and his wife. Edward's second daughter I believe was married on the 16th Instt. We had very pressing invitations but could not go. I understand the connexion is everything that could be desired.

I suppose before I wind up I must tell you a little about ourselves. We are gradually recovering from our terrible disasters — but it will be long before we cease to feel the effects. I have nearly completed a new house near the site of the old ruins. I should not have built at

present but have to leave the place I am living in. I was not well prepared for the outlay and it will keep me very short of money for the next two years. My wife who is of a more prudent nature than I would have been content to live in a slab hut or anything else until we could better afford the expense, but I told her I did not expect to live many years and wanted for my allotted term to live in comfort. Besides the bare idea of an estate of 22000 acres, and positively not one decent house on it. We had a great hurricane here the last summer which covered the ground so thick with trees that bush travelling in many parts is impracticable, and now they have had a most fearful hurricane at Nicol Bay which destroyed every house and building in the township and committed great ravages an the flocks and herds. Shakespeare has just arrived from the place.

My old friend Mrs Luke Leake died last Tuesday, she was always most kind to us and I feel her loss very very much. Dora and our little boy I am thankful to say are well, he's a fine intelligent child a great favourite with everybody. His Aunts and cousins around often send him nice little presents through the mail. He will any time leave his meals or throw away his toys to turn over the leaves of a book whether it has pictures or not. I hope this is a good sign, although some of the greatest lights of the world have disliked books in their young days. You did not state how long you were likely to remain in Sydney. I send this in the hope you may get it before you leave. Remember me particularly to your vagrant husband my wife unites with me in love to you all and may the blessing of the Almighty attend you.

Ever affect^{ly} yours

H H Hall